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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/09/2022

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SUBJECT: HUNGARY'S RESPONSE TO GAERC FEBRUARY 12-13 FOREIGN
MINISTERS MEETING

REF: A) SECSTATE 13840 B) BUDAPEST 175 C) BUDAPEST 174

Classified By: POL/C Eric V. Gaudiosi. Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: MFA Foreign and Security Policy Department Deputy Andras Dekany told poloff on 9 February that FM Goncz will primarily discuss Kosovo status at the February 12-13 GAERC meeting. The FM will also brief the other GAERC FMs re her recent travel to the Middle East. Though not likely to speak on the topic, Dekany relayed the FM's prepared point on Iran calling for a unified EU position. End Summary.

12. (C) On 8 February Prime Minister Gyurcsany forwarded a letter to German Chancellor Merkel, EC President Barroso and High Commissioner Solana expressing Hungary's position on Kosovo (full text forwarded to EUR/NCE and EUR/SCE). The letter calls for a parallel approach to Kosovo and Serbia and serves as "Hungary's policy" on the issues, according to Dekany. Gyurcsany expresses support for the Ahtisaari plan, suggesting that both parties concerned be given the possibility of expressing their views "within a reasonable timeframe." (Comment: Dekany did not specify how the GoH would interpret a "reasonable timeframe," but we note FM Goncz's ref b suggestion to Ambassador Foley that the Serbian Parliament be allowed to reconvene before further steps are taken. End Comment.) He underscored the vital importance of a Security Council Resolution to formalize status arrangements, and highlights the importance of "upholding the rights of communities" by establishing a "forward-looking system to ensure the rights" of minorities in Kosovo as a key element in any settlement. The PM also calls to "reconfirm Serbia's European perspectives" by resuming talks on the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) upon formation of a new Serbian government, noting that ICTY compliance remains a precursor for the "entry into force of the (SAA) agreement." Hungary also supports a timetable for "liberalizing the visa regime" which it considers critical to modernization and economic growth in the region.

13. (C) Further to ref c discussion of Iran with FM Goncz, Dekany affirmed that the GOH "fully supports" the EU President's proposed two-stage process. Though prompted to elaborate on a number of economic related actions including freezing assets, halting export credits and revoking bank licenses, Dekany would not elaborate beyond saying that Hungary seeks "to preserve unity in the EU" by supporting the consensus opinion of the other members. He added that he expects the debate to focus on the framework laid out under the current UNSC sanctions.

14. (C) FM Goncz will brief her counterparts regarding her recent travel to the Middle East. Dekany did not relate any substantive positions regarding the GAERC agenda items, noting that Hungary is interested in "hearing the consensus" of the GAERC foreign ministers.
FOLEY